

VZCZCXYZ0025
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHUJA #1308/01 2011439
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 201439Z JUL 09
FM AMEMBASSY ABUJA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6593
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHYD/AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE PRIORITY 0967
RUEHOS/AMCONSUL LAGOS PRIORITY 1683
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABUJA 001308

CONFIDENTIAL
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/W, INR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/26/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [KDEM](#) [NI](#)
SUBJECT: NIGERIA: U.S.-UK COORDINATION MEETING

REF: HC-Amb joint demarche in April, 2009, to Minister of the Niger Delta

Classified By: Ambassador Robin Renee Sanders for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary. On July 17, 2009, the Ambassador and an interagency team (DOD, USAID, RAO, POL, PD) met with their UK counterparts, led by Charge d'Affaires Peter West to discuss opportunities for increased U.S.-UK cooperation. The working group identified four primary areas of shared interest: electoral reform and democracy (good governance), military cooperation, the Niger Delta, and anti-corruption. While the U.S. and UK are already working closely on several development projects in Nigeria, the discussion led to additional areas of potential cooperation which are highlighted below. The U.S. Mission highlighted some of the analysis it has done state-by-state and on our concern about the lack of movement on electoral reform, which could lead to a repeat of poor elections in ¶2011. The Charge said they still need to do more internal discussion, but in principal the UK agreed with the USG view on these issues. End summary.

Electoral Reform/Democracy

¶2. (C) On electoral reform, the U.S. and UK political and development messages are very much in sync and aimed at deepening democracy in Nigeria. Going forward, both sides discussed the importance of when it would be useful or propitious to be more public about concerns over the 2011 elections. At this stage, however, discussions on electoral reform at the UK Mission are internal where the USG in Washington and in the field have begun to note the importance we place on election reform as part of good governance. The UK side said they have not lobbied London to take a more critical public stance, partly because they did not assess that London is ready to do so, noting that there is little parliamentary interest in Nigeria. The U.S. team suggested Anambra's 2010 election as a good starting point for monitoring collaboration as it is a likely precursor to the 2011 elections. The Brits said they would inform London about the USG suggestion on Anambra as a way to show our joint concern on electoral reform. This could also nudge their capital to start reviewing its Nigeria election posture. They also signaled their preference to involve the larger international community, such as the EU, in our discussion on electoral reform. On the development side, the U.S. and UK are already working very closely on civil society, National Assembly, and political party strengthening, and would continue to collaborate on training and capacity building in these key areas.

Military Cooperation

13. (C) The U.S. and UK delegations identified several areas for increased military cooperation. These include IT and infrastructure support for Regional Maritime Awareness Capability (RMAC) centers, with the possibility of installing an additional RMAC system in Calabar; training and technical assistance for the state-of-the-art, UK-constructed Maritime Training Center in Lagos; technical support for a joint geographic center in Abuja to help the Nigerian military with hydrographic and geospatial mapping; data sharing and other collaboration in a UK-proposed operations center (equivalent to a U.S. fusion center); collaborating on African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA), Joint Combined Exercise Training (JCET), and Counterterrorism (CT) training; and providing complementary support to the ECOWAS stand-by force. The Ambassador also asked the DOD team whether a British sailor would be on board the Africa Partnership Station (APS) ship scheduled to visit Lagos in the coming months.

Niger Delta

14. (C) On the Niger Delta, both sides agreed to continue sending like-minded messages on the need for a comprehensive framework to resolve the legitimate political and development needs of the region, and to expand on the already strong development partnership. Both sides identified areas to increase collaboration on health issues HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment, and in other development areas such as youth empowerment and conflict resolution. The UK has also been asked by the GON to provide assistance on amnesty, specifically DDR programs, in light of recent events, and asked if the U.S. was also engaged with the GON on this issue. The USG side said that while the USG was not working directly with the GON on amnesty issues, as we had concerns whether it would work outside of an overall political framework to address the legitimate grievances in the region. The USG team asked whether we should consider suggesting to the GON to reconsider its hard-line stance on "no outsiders" and consider a "best practices" strategy from other international efforts to develop a broader political framework aimed at addressing amnesty, DDR, and development issues impacting the Niger Delta. The UK team agreed that this would be an effective collaborative approach, and we both said we would send this suggestion back to our capitals.

Anti-corruption Efforts

15. (C) The anti-corruption discussion immediately turned to issues surrounding the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), where the UK, unlike the U.S., has been working with the anti-corruption body at the working level and permitting its first secretary to meet with Chairperson Farida Waziri. While joint projects with the EFCC are not likely at this stage, both sides saw opportunities to work together on strengthening the courts. The teams also agreed to collaborate on drug-related issues through the Nigerian Drug and Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), with which the U.S. already has a positive working relationship and the UK recently signed an MOU. The UK group then raised the issue of visa sanctions, saying the U.S. could greatly assist by preventing certain corrupt officials from entering the U.S. that have already been barred from entering the UK. While not explicitly stated, it was clear that the UK team was referring to one case in particular, that involving former Delta State Governor James Ibori and his associates. The Charge said that the British Metropolitan Police (MET) already have arrest warrants for Ibori and 7-10 of his associates to include other politicians and government officials (Note: in an earlier engagement, Charge West told the Ambassador that Yar'Adua Principal Secretary David Edevbie is listed in the arrest warrant. End note). The Ambassador said MET Police would need to collaborate directly with FBI HQ on the law enforcement aspects of this case if we were to begin a discussion on visa sanctions for those 7-10 individuals.

16. (C) Comment. The UK High Commission was clearly appreciative of the opportunity to dialogue and identify areas of further cooperation, but admitted they had more homework to do on what their steps would be to address their concerns on electoral reform. They expressed their readiness to share our ideas with London. We also were surprised that they did not push us for greater cooperation on nabbing James Ibori whose arrest has become somewhat of an obsession in the High Commission. We know from previous interactions with our

UK colleagues that they do share our analytical views on electoral reform and other issues, but it was apparent that they wanted to talk more internally and make suggestions to London on this issue.

17. (C) All that being said, we consider this first working meeting critical for strengthening our bilateral cooperation on the ground on these four thematic issues. British Charge d'Affaires West seemed eager to hold another follow-up meeting at the High Commission and we agreed to hold these quarterly. We expect that we will have an even fuller discussion in the next meeting as we approach the 2011 election, now due in 22 months. End comment.

SANDERS